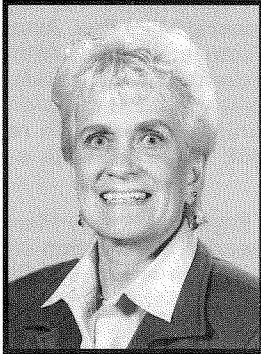


# Hammerstrom's

for the people  
in the 17th Senate District

# Hotline



State Senator  
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July 11, 2005



**PROJECT GO-GET OUTDOORS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 23** The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is inviting Michigan's parks and recreation organizations to participate in its Project GO-Get Outdoors initiative Saturday, July 23, 2005. Project GO encourages people all across the state to engage in an outdoor recreational activity or event at the same time. State parks, recreation areas, and water access sites are hosting a variety of events, beginning at 10 a.m. on July 23. All visitors at state parks will receive a free GO-Get Outdoors sticker and 50 participants at each location will receive "GO-PASSES!" coupons which may be shared with family and friends. The coupons are good for a free visit to a state park before December 31, 2005. For more information about Project GO and a list of events in your area, please visit the DNR's website at [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr), and click on the Recreation and Camping icon, or contact my office.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Michigan has 97 state park and recreation areas, 97 state game and wildlife areas, and 3.9 million acres of state forests.

**STATE LAUNCHES FIRST CHILD PROTECTION REGISTRY** In 2004, the Michigan Legislature approved Public Act 241 of 2004, also known as the Michigan's Children's Protection Registry Act, creating the first child protection registry in the nation. As of July 1, 2005, parents can now register their minor child's electronic contacts, such as e-mail addresses and instant messenger screen names, with the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG). Under PA 241, a person is prohibited from sending inappropriate communications, such as pornographic advertisements, to those contacts included in the registry. Senders of prohibited material are required to remove registered e-mail addresses from their electronic mailing lists within 30 days. If a registered contact receives a prohibited message, a complaint may be filed with the state Attorney General's office. Violators will face criminal and possible civil penalties. A first violation is a misdemeanor; subsequent violations are felonies. To learn more about the registry, please visit [www.michigan.gov/protectmichild](http://www.michigan.gov/protectmichild), or contact my office.

**SENATE INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO FURTHER PROTECT NURSING HOME RESIDENTS** The Michigan Senate recently introduced a three-bill package requiring residential care facilities across the state to conduct criminal background checks of all potential employees, and conduct checks on all current employees annually. Senate Bills 621 through 623 also increase the criminal penalties against facilities that fail to comply with the background check requirements. The legislation was introduced in response to the results of a study conducted by the office of state Attorney General Mike Cox. Attorney General Cox revealed that almost 10 percent of current residential care employees have had criminal convictions. The Attorney General's Health Care Fraud Division has shared the report's findings with each of Michigan's approximately 5,000 residential care facilities, as well as notified local authorities about nursing home employees with outstanding warrants. The Division has also requested and received information from nursing homes regarding those employees with criminal histories. To report patient abuse in a residential care facility, call the Attorney General's 24-hour Hotline at 800-24-ABUSE (800-242-2873); e-mail [hcf@michigan.gov](mailto:hcf@michigan.gov); or visit the Attorney General's website at [www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag).

**MICHIGAN SAFETY BELT USE REACHES NEW RECORD LEVEL** The Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning recently announced that a record-setting number of Michigan motorists are buckling up. A recent statewide observation survey conducted by Wayne State University found nearly 93 percent of motorists were buckled up. The *Buckle Up or Pay Up, Click It or Ticket* statewide safety belt mobilization, which ran May 23 through June 5, included a record number of safety belt enforcement zones in the majority of the state's counties. Although enforcement was increased, the number of reported safety belt citations fell from the same period a year ago. This year topped the state's record set last year when safety belt use reached 90.5 percent following the Labor Day holiday, making it one of only six states with a safety belt use at or above 90 percent. This year's safety belt enforcement strategy was tweaked to include five additional counties to reflect summer tourist and travel patterns. Strict traffic enforcement will continue throughout the summer with local safety belt and drunk driving enforcement throughout June, July, and August. Summer traffic safety enforcement will conclude with a statewide drunk driving crackdown that coincides with the Labor Day weekend.